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Letter No. 2301

February 26, 1987

**CORN SALE  
TO USSR**

On Feb. 24, the U.S. Department of Agriculture confirmed the sale of 1 million metric tons of U.S. corn to the Soviets, for delivery during the fourth year of the Long Term Grain Supply Agreement. This sale to the Soviets was the first reported for delivery during the fourth year of the agreement, which ends Sept. 30, 1987. Sales of wheat and corn to the Soviet for delivery during the third year of the agreement, which ended on Sept. 30, 1986, totaled 6,960,700 tons, of which wheat was 152,600 tons and corn was 6,808,100 tons. In addition, sales of soybeans totaled 1,518,700 tons.

**INCREASED  
U.S. CORN TO  
JAPAN & S. KOREA?**

Japanese and South Korean demand for U.S. corn could increase sharply, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Recent indications of a shortfall in Argentine corn production could lead to greater purchases of U.S. corn. The U.S. agricultural counselor in Tokyo predicts that U.S. corn exports to Japan in 1986/87 could increase as much as 15 pct. or about 1 million 400 thousand tons, for a total of 10 million 900 thousand tons. In Korea, traders bought 500 thousand tons of U.S. corn in mid-Feb., bringing total commitments to over 2 million 100 thousand tons for 1986/87—more than 900 thousand tons greater than a year ago.

**U.S.-SOVIET  
GRAIN TALKS**

On Feb. 24, U.S. and Soviet officials concluded their session at the U.S. Department of Agriculture of the regular, semi-annual consultations called for under the long-term grain agreement. The consultations included a discussion of the supply, demand and market situations for grains, and a review of progress and prospects for shipments and sales under the agreement. Also discussed was the export enhancement program offer extended to the Soviets late last summer and the reasons the offer was not used.

**U.S. WHEAT MORE  
COMPETITIVE**

Lower market prices have made U.S. wheat more competitive in the world marketplace. However, large crops and carryover stocks in importing countries hold the 1986/87 world trade outlook to a modest 3 pct. growth, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The U.S. Export Enhancement Program was expanded to many key markets, including China. Overall, the export bonus program will be the primary reason that 1986/87 U.S. wheat exports will rebound 12 pct. from last year's poor season.

**PAYMENTS DATE  
EXTENDED**

The date for determining eligibility for payments under the 1987 farm programs was extended from Mar. 1 to Apr. 1, according to Sec'y of Agriculture Richard Lyng.

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## WHEAT OUTLOOK

The winter wheat harvest this summer may well match or exceed last year's 1 billion 500 million bushels, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. This projection assumes that yields return to a more normal level following the 8 pct. drop in 1986 to 34.4 bushels. Such yields could offset the 10 pct. cut in the acreage planted last fall, when seedings tumbled to 48 million 700 thousand acres, the fewest since 1978, mainly because of heavy producer enrollment in the 1987 reduction program. Spring wheat farmers are also expected to decrease production area.

LARGE WHEAT  
SUPPLIES TO  
PERSIST

Despite acreage reduction, large U.S. wheat supplies are likely to persist in 1987/88, due to normal yields, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Growth in demand will be needed to support prices. However, wheat feed use in the summer quarter may not exceed the year-earlier level because of the substantial feed grain supply. Domestic wheat product consumption should continue current growth trends. Demand for U.S. exports may be hampered by a record or near record world harvest resulting from higher yields.

WHEAT PROTEIN  
CONTENT

For one year, beginning May 1, the U.S. Department of Agriculture will certify the protein content of wheat on any percentage-of-moisture basis requested by the client. This interim action delays until May 1, 1988, formalization of plans by USDA's Federal Grain Inspection Service to certify protein content in wheat only on a 12-pct.-moisture basis. The grain industry requested the delay to give it time to adjust.

OLD WHEAT SEEDS  
NO BARGAIN

Research by the U.S. Department of Agriculture indicates only 35 to 50 pct. of old wheat seed will germinate if planted during a wet fall in soil infested by Pythium fungus in the Pacific Northwest. Some growers were forced to totally replant. The seed industry is now getting rid of old seed. Yields can drop 10 to 25 pct. if old seed is planted in late fall in cold, damp, fungus-infested soil. The USDA researcher recommends ways to counteract yield losses. One is to plant old seed earlier in warm, dry soil; another is to put in brand new seed for later plantings in colder, wet soil.

RED MEAT  
PRODUCTION

Commercial red meat production for the U.S. in Jan. 1987 totaled 3 billion 410 million pounds, down 2 pct. from January 1986, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Beef production totaled 2 billion 100 million pounds; veal, 39 million pounds; pork, 1 billion 240 million; lamb and mutton, 25 million pounds.

DISASTER PAYMENTS  
FOR 1986 CROP  
LOSSES

Over 120,000 producers in 39 States will receive \$400 million in generic commodity certificates for crop losses suffered in 1986, according to Sec'y of Agriculture Richard E. Lyng. Lyng said, "County Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service offices will begin mailing certificates by the end of February." The crop losses of 1986 crops were caused by drought, excessive heat, excessive moisture, flood or hail. Producer's claims were based on losses in excess of 50 pct. of expected production.





FROM OUR  
TELEVISION  
SERVICE

CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM...A new display was recently prepared by the U.S. Department of Agriculture focusing on the conservation provisions of the Food Security Act of 1985. George Dunlop, Assistant Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment, talks about this display. DeBoria Janifer interviews. (136)

CURRENT AGRICULTURAL OUTLOOK...Productivity in U.S. agriculture accelerated to nearly six percent a year from 1979 to 1984, and the outlook for the U.S. economy is also expected to increase. USDA economist Herb Moses focuses on factors contributing to the outlook for agriculture. DeBoria Janifer interviews. (137)

LIVESTOCK AND POULTRY OUTLOOK...Beef cow numbers have increased in some states due to recovery from drought, rather than expansion based on economic incentives. USDA economist Leland Southard talks about the current livestock and poultry outlook. Vic Powell interviews. (138)

SALMONELLA AND POULTRY...Recent reports indicate that nearly four out of ten chickens sold are contaminated by salmonella organisms. Dr. Lester Crawford with USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service, describes inspection procedures and efforts being taken to control the spread of salmonella. DeBoria Janifer interviews. (139)

BIOTECHNOLOGY AND AGRICULTURE...The use of biotechnology is now being applied to agriculture in many ways, such as increasing plant yields and improving animals by modification of genes. Terry Medley with USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service talks about coordinating the Department's regulatory activities on biotechnology. Marlene Stinson interviews. (140)

FROM OUR RADIO  
SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #1552...(Weekly 13½ min documentary) What will happen to the 1985 Farm Bill? What will change? What will stay the same. Gary Crawford takes a look at the upcoming farm debate in Congress.

AGRITAPE/FARM PROGRAM REPORT #1541...(Weekly reel of news features) USDA news highlights; 1987 acreage reduction compliance aides; Tobacco industry remains strong; Boosting calf survival; Defying the Colorado Potato Beetle.

CONSUMER TIME #1034...(Weekly reel of 2½-3 min features) Salmonella; "Hardening-Off"; Buying winter clothes in spring; Where to shop; How big is too big in clothes.

USDA RADIO NEWS SERVICE...Fri, Mar. 6, World cocoa situation; Mon, Mar. 9, Crop production report, Horticultural products report, World ag. supply and demand, Soviet grain situation and outlook; Tues, Mar. 10, Weekly weather and crop outlook, World crop production report, World oilseed situation report, World cotton situation report, World grain situation, World tobacco situation; Thurs, Mar. 12, Farm labor report, Sugar and sweetener report; Fri, Mar. 13, Milk production report, Cattle on feed. Dial the USDA National News Line 202-488-8358 or 8359. All material changed at 5 p.m. ET each working day.

OFF MIKE

Not to belabor a point, but when you're not used to snow, a record amount can get a bit tiresome. The latest snowstorm (our third) decided to be different. The snow was the wettest, heaviest I've ever experienced (and remember, I used to live in Idaho.)

Debbie Janifer, our "Down to Earth" TV producer, lost a huge tree alongside her house when the wet snow weighted the branches to the point where the trunk split in two. According to Debbie, "The house doesn't look the same at all without that old tree."

On the other hand, Gene Williams (KFEQ, St. Joseph, MO) said he tilled his garden over the weekend and is planting radishes and lettuce. On the other, other hand Davonna Oskarson-Scott, now senior advertising copy writer with Southern States Cooperative in Richmond, Virginia, wrote to say the big snow that hit here hit Richmond, too. Her husband had to put chains on snow tires just to get out of the driveway. That's what 25 inches of the stuff will do to you, alright ... Dana Bennett, friend of agriculture and co-founder with his wife Edith of the Foundation of American Agriculture, died February 15. A memorial service was held in the USDA Patio. Sec'y of Agriculture Richard Lyng and former Sec'y John Block spoke at the service ... Rich Hull (Kansas Ag Net, Topeka, KS) stopped by the office this week. We were tied up in a meeting so didn't get to see him. But he had a nice visit with Brenda Curtis-Heiken in radio ... Jack Dillard says he's lost his drawers in Waskom, Texas. In this case, we're speaking of the post office type drawers. The Waskom post office replaced its drawers with post office boxes, so Jack has a new mailing address: P.O. Box 1717. He also reports he's working with Ray Forcier at KWKH in Shreveport, Louisiana. He had been at KOOI/KEBE, Jacksonville, Texas ... Parting shot from Johnnie Martin (Ohio Farm Bureau, Columbus: "How come everyone spells out a trillion dollars rather than fight with the zeros?"

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